

## The One That Got Away by LadyofStories

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**Summary:**

Richie is unable to move on from Eddie's death, or Eddie in general.

## The One That Got Away

*Summer after high school, when we first met...*

They were thirteen years old, still so naive despite their crude language and behavior. Seven of them became the closest of friends and teamed against the danger which lurked in the sewers of Derry, Maine. It wasn't the best summer. It was terrifying. They just wanted to have fun, but ended up chasing after some clown together to save other children like them. It wasn't the overall worst summer, however. It was one of the best, because they had found each other, all of them.

Richie had found Eddie in a hopeless place such as Derry, Maine. They were two young boys who found themselves very involved in one another. Hormones made carefreeness difficult, however. Richie was a gay kid, living in a shitty place like Derry in the '80s. He wanted to hang out with Eddie, but he found that he was also attracted to him. It was just one damn summer, and he was whipped as hell.

Richie carved it in the form of initials, and it was set in wood for 27 years since then, to be rediscovered.

*Talk about our future like we had a clue....*

**1992**

"Hey, Eds," Richie spoke up, breaking the painful silence. He was lying with his head at one end of the hammock, and Eddie was at the other, reading a Marvel comic. Richie didn't care to acknowledge which one it was at the moment because his mind was on other things. Like how close Eddie was to him, how their bare legs brushed because Eddie was wearing those fucking shorts and he himself had

on shorts. God, Richie could feel how warm Eddie was, and how smooth his legs were, despite his pubescence. He had a strong urge to trail his fingers over those legs, feel them with his hands and not against his own leg. His mind was also on the fact that they were alone, and they could do so many other things together, and nobody would ever know.

Eddie hummed in response, showing Richie that he was listening. Richie took it as the “go ahead” to keep talking. “What are our plans for after graduation?” Richie didn’t want to know that answer, but he knew it had to come. He needed to know where they would be, like a reassurance. There was a pause that followed after, leaving Richie to dread the answer. “What do you mean?” Eddie asked. “Like, college?”

“Yeah, something like that. Are we going to, y’know, keep in touch?”

Richie was scared of losing Eddie. He wanted to tell him so many things, but he couldn’t. He was Richie Tozier. He was big talk, but he couldn’t fucking say what he needed to say. What he wanted to say. He just spouted bullshit because he was a pussy. Even if Richie wanted to, he couldn’t admit what he felt, only beat around the bush. It was all jokes with him, because being serious was terrifying. At least he could lie or shrug it off as a joke and keep moving along, pretending everything was fine or that he wasn’t in love with his fucking best friend--

“My mom has been trying to convince me to stay, but I am going to New York. I’ll see what we can do about keeping in touch, unless you are coming too?” Eddie had it all figured out, as Richie had expected. Richie opened his mouth, about to say something absolutely life-changing, but then he stopped himself and thought better of it. “I’m going to LA. Just like I’ve got a big dick, I’ve got big dreams too, to match.” Richie shrugged off the pain with a joke, acting once again like everything was just fine. Eddie threw his comic book at Richie who laughed and put his hands up.

“*Oh my god*, shut up! Beep beep, Rich!”

*Never planned that one day,*

*I'd be losing you.....*

Richie watched as the Neibolt house was caving in. He was being dragged back from the scene before him, despite his protestant thrashing and screaming and kicking. He fought against his friends' grip. From behind dirty, blood covered lenses, Richie watched and he fought to go back. Eddie was in there, why the hell were they leaving him?! He had to go back to him, he had to get him. Richie vainly struggled to escape the grip on his arms.

Eventually, Richie managed to tear away and he collapsed to the ground in doing so, onto his hands and knees. The house had completely caved in, and from the hole where it once stood, dust rose. He got some scrapes on his hands and knees which began bleeding thanks to the asphalt beneath him, but Richie didn't care. The pain didn't reach him yet, in his emotional distress.

"Eddie!!!!" Everyone within earshot had to endure the anguished scream. It was the broken, lost scream of a man who has lost everything. The anguish of a man who lost the one true love of his life. A love that lasted 27 whole years. It all started one summer, with a carving set in wood, not very forgotten. They didn't understand this pain, know where it was coming from, but they themselves could feel themselves break for the man on his knees before them. Richie screamed to the sky as he felt his heart ache terribly, painfully twisting with his loss. "Why didn't you take me instead?!" He was angry. The rage was a fire, burning brightly and dangerously. Beverly was kneeling beside him, a knot forming in her throat for her dear friend as she pulls him into an embrace. Richie couldn't take it anymore, feeling someone touching him, holding him. He cried, heavily and whole-heartedly. "Y-You should have f-fucking left me there to die...."

Oh, Eddie, don't make him wait too long....

*In another life, I would be your boy....*

Richie was numb since the day Eddie had departed from them. He was unable to properly care for himself, leading to him living with Beverly and Ben. At nights, he had recurring nightmares, and sometimes he would be cursed with the most blissful dreams he would wake up from to disappointment and cry once more because of.

He couldn't help but imagine what it would have been like if Eddie were to have still been alive. Richie spent too long fantasizing about such an alternative, and he wished he was fucking crazy so he could hallucinate such a possibility. Maybe it would make the pain stop, and maybe it would make the dreams hurt a little less. It had been so long, but his heart still refused to forget.

Maybe if things were different....

*I was June and you were my Johnny Cash.*

*Never one without the other, we made a pact.*

*Sometimes when I miss you, I put those records on....*

Richie pulled out the box he told himself he would never look at again. It hurt too much to look at it, let alone dig around through it. Richie didn't give a shit anymore and decided he needed to do it for himself, especially after receiving the letter from Stan and thinking about what he would specifically tell him. He pulled out the old mixtapes, but he stopped himself at the one his gaze fell upon. He broke down on the spot, clutching the tape to his chest which read on the side on the white tape, "Eddie My Love".

It brought him back to a time where things were better and Eddie was still alive. It took him all the way back to 1993. The smell of lavender, the feeling of warm skin, the sound of laughter and their banter. The familiar sight of a certain teen's terrible fashion, which he always thought his mother picked out for him.

Richie popped the tape in and listened to it while he shook terribly and cried. He knew that it would concern Ben and Beverly, but he could honestly give less than a shit. If the house burned down with him in it at that moment, it wouldn't matter.

Nothing mattered without him.

Why couldn't he forget again?

*We'd keep all our promises, be us against the world....*

## 1994

It was after graduation for the seven of them. Everyone had plans to go somewhere and do big things. Richie's plans, he knew, were not the most impressive. He was dreading the moment to say goodbye, which came too soon for his liking. One by one, each of the Losers departed to go their own way. It went on like that, until it was just him, Eddie, and Mike.

Mike had made the decision to remain in Derry while everyone else left, for when the 27 years would pass. Eddie was the next to go, and Richie wasn't ready for that. He never would have been ready for them to go separate ways. The day Eddie came up to him caught him off guard, even though Eddie had told him ahead of time when he would be leaving.

"So, I've got to go," Eddie told Richie, and it caused for Richie's stomach to tighten up and his heart to clench agonizingly. "Keep in touch, okay, dickhead?" Richie did his best to stay composed, forcing a smile onto his face. He pulled Eddie into a hug, to hide the pain he was doing his damned best to cover up. Richie hated himself so much

because he couldn't say what he longed so badly to say.

"I promise, I will," Eddie told him, not knowing that he would forget even knowing Richie just a few hours from that very moment when he would exit the town.

*In another life, I would make you stay....*

Richie looked down at the hoodie in his hands. It was something he had worn after Eddie's death, when he found his luggage after having left his jacket back in the house with Eddie. The hoodie became something Richie treasured with every fiber of his being. He clung to it, even when it stopped smelling like Eddie, because it was what he had left of him. Richie tightly gripped the hoodie in his hands and buried his face into the fabric, letting out muffled sobs as his hands twisted, crumpling it.

Richie wished so badly that he could have made something go differently. Maybe if he had just flipped the both of them over and saved Eddie from impalement. Maybe if he had stopped the bleeding somehow and kept him alive long enough to be saved.

God, the blood. It haunted Richie's waking moments. He still remembered washing off the blood from his glasses and breaking down again, the blood on his clothing, the blood on Eddie. All he could see was red, but it wasn't poetically beautiful like what Ben had written for Bev so long ago.

It was haunting, more like Edgar Allen Poe than a romantic haiku.

*I should've told you what you meant to me....*

Richie never got to tell him the most important thing and lost his chance forever. Eddie would never know that he loved him. Richie

was cursed for the rest of his life to never be with Eddie. What nights could have been spent in the arms of the one he loved most were spent curled up alone, feeling cold as ice. What days could have been spent, seeing a smiling face and hearing the insincere teasing comments were instead full of empty day to day routines where he fed his fat pet goldfish he purchased in hopes of them serving as some kind of light in his life.

Richie had depression, and it was coming to a final straw for him. Losing Eddie was probably the worst weight on top of his pre-existing diagnosis. There was only so much Richie could take of the emptiness. He couldn't fucking take anymore of the same bullshit of waking up to nobody there to greet him with a good morning kiss, walking through an empty apartment which feels nothing like home to him, feeding his fucking goldfish which were just a dull orange glimmer in his world of black and white, and being expected to act like he was fine.

It was hell, and he thought he had an easy way out.

*'Cause now I pay the price.....*

Richie dragged himself from his kitchen and walked into the living room where the goldfish were, bending down to look through the glass at them. He looked exhausted, but that didn't matter at the moment. Richie tapped at the glass, then glanced over at the picture of the Losers he had framed beside his little aquarium. He picked it up and dropped it into the tank before walking away. He passed by his radio system and switched it on, turning the volume up high.

The sound of the music followed him to the bathroom, but it fell upon deaf ears.

The voice was screaming louder.

Later, Richie Tozier would be found laying in his bathtub when a noise complaint is filed and would be whisked away just in time to be



rescued from his suicide attempt, similar to that of an old friend. A knife which had been used long ago to carve out initials would be forgotten on the ground in the bathroom, blood staining the blade.

A note would be shown to his friends who rush to the hospital to see him upon receiving the news.

**“I just wanted to tell you I love you :)”**

*The one that got away...*

**Author's Note:**

Take my uwus for compensation for the emotional trauma I caused, or just look at my other Reddie shit to revive your happy mood.